

Newark
- Housing Authority
- Misc.
Ind. c. 1956 or
after

HOUSING PROJECT HISTORY & ORIGINS

HOUSING PROJECT

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The following is a brief history of the origins of the Housing Projects that comprise the Newark Redevelopment and Housing Authority.

BAXTER TERRACE (N.J. 2-5 & 2-22B)
25 SUMMIT STREET,
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY 07102

This complex, established in 1941, was named for James M. Baxter. Baxter was not only Newark's first Black principal, but according to record, he was the first Black teacher in New Jersey. He began teaching in 1864 in a small school house on Lafayette Street, Newark, and went on to become principal of the "Public Colored School" and Dean of the city's staff of principals. Baxter was also the first Black Commissioner of the Newark Housing Authority. He retired in 1909 and died the same year.

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BRADLEY COURT (N.J. 2-14 & 2-20)
46 NORTH MUNN AVENUE
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

This complex, established in 1940, was named for Joseph P. Bradley. Bradley was born near Albany, New York in 1813. Having held a variety of positions throughout an interesting career, Bradley was one of the more prominent figures in Newark's early history. After graduating from Rutgers in 1836, he came to Newark where he practiced law for thirty years. He later went on to become Associate Justice to the United States Supreme Court. He was involved in many important decisions. His vote was the deciding one in the Electoral Commission of 1877. He was also a key figure in the Presidential Election Contest between Rutherford B. Hayes and Samuel Tilden.

Bradley was also an outstanding writer and mathematician.

Joseph P. Bradley died in 1892.

COLUMBUS HOMES (N.J. 2-13)
112 8TH AVENUE
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

In 1956, Christopher Columbus Homes was established at the site of 7th Avenue, High and Sheffield Streets. Obviously, this project was named for the discoverer of our country. The fact that this was, at that time, a predominantly Italian-American neighborhood was also a contributing factor to the selection of the name.

Christopher Columbus Homes is one of New Jersey's largest high-rise housing projects. It was originally designed by Newark Architect, William Lehman, Jr.

FELIX FULD COURT (N.J. 2-8)
147 ROSE STREET
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

Named for civic leader, Felix Fuld, this housing project opened in 1942. Fuld came to this country by the age of 12 and in 1892, he formed a partnership with Louis Bamberger. Well known for his success as Vice-President and Treasurer of Bamberger and Company (later known as Bamberger's and currently, Macy's). Fuld also attained a huge amount of respect for his extensive community involvement and his many generous contributions to various charities.

Fuld was not only a renowned businessman but he was also an outstanding philanthropist. He achieved a reputation as a great humanitarian in business dealings as well as his civic activities.

Felix Fuld died in 1929.

HAYES HOMES (N.J. 2-12 & 2-18)
68 BOYD STREET
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

This complex, established in 1954, was named for Reverend Dr. William P. Hayes, who had the distinction of being the first person in this part of the country to have a housing project named after him while he was still living.

Born in 1881, he was not only known for his strong participation in civic and religious activities, but he was also the first Black man in the United States to head a housing authority.

Hayes was elected President of the Newark Ministerial Association in 1944 and was awarded a plaque for his contributions in the public housing field that same year. He died in 1963.

HYATT COURT (N.J. 2-7)
2 ROANOKE COURT
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

Named for John Wesley Hyatt, this housing project opened in 1942. Hyatt made a significant contribution to Newark's early history. His invention of celluloid and roller bearers led to the development of two major companies, Hyatt Roller Bearing Company and the Celluloid Corporation. The first automobiles had Hyatt's roller bearings built into them. The Hyatt Roller Bearing Company went on to provide nearly all motorcars and trucks with bearings.

Hyatt's Celluloid Manufacturing Company was established in 1872. It was found that Hyatt's plastic could be made into tubes of various colors, sheets, rods, etc. The company moved from Albany to Newark in 1873 and later branched out in 1937 with the main office on Ferry Street. Because of the growth of his firms and his patents for roller bearings and celluloid, John Wesley Hyatt was long remembered after his death (he died in 1920.)

KRETCHMER HOMES (N.J. 2-10, 2-17 & 2-21A)
71 LUDLOW STREET
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

This complex, established in 1953, was named for Otto Kretchmer, a well-known citizen of Newark. Kretchmer was a member of the Newark Housing Authority and also President of Peerless Imperial Company. He began work with Imperial as a secretary in 1914, at which time they were called "Imperial Manufacturing Company." After a reorganization, Kretchmer became President. The plant manufactured typewriter ribbons and carbon paper and did an international business.

Kretchmer was a member of the National Association of Manufacturers, Chamber of Commerce, Masons, Elks, and other organizations.

Otto Kretchmer died in 1950.

PENNINGTON COURT (N.J. 2-2)
214 SOUTH STREET
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

Pennington Court, which was established in 1940, was named for a prominent family in Newark's early history. William Pennington, son of Governor William Stanford Pennington, was born in Newark May 4, 1796. He held the positions of Chancellor and Governor from 1837 to 1843.

Alexander C. M. Pennington was born in Newark in 1810 (his father was Samuel Pennington, a brother of above mentioned Governor William Stanford Pennington). Alexander Pennington was a member of the House of Representatives and served as Brigadier - General, in which he commanded the Essex Brigade.

Samuel Pennington was born in Newark in 1806. In addition to his schooling, he studied medicine with his uncle and later succeeded to his practice in 1839. Besides being a prominent physician, he made significant contributions to the field of medical education with his numerous writings. After 17 years as a prominent member of the public school board, he was elected president and remained so for 7 years.

They were all descendants of Ephraim Pennington, who was originally from New Haven.

SCUDDER HOMES (N.J. 2-19)
165 COURT STREET
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

This housing project, which opened in 1942, was named for Edward W. Scudder. Born in 1881, Scudder was publisher of the Newark Evening News from 1931 to 1950. Son of the great Wallace M. Scudder, who built the newspaper into an outstanding publication, Edward Wallace Scudder was admired for his conscientiousness and ability to rise up through the ranks, rather than to take any easy steps to attain the position his father held previously. He was a well respected member of his community because of his civic activities, as well as his creativity in shaping the editorial policies of the newspaper.

Edward W. Scudder died in 1952.

SETH BOYDEN (N.J. 2-1, 2-21E & 2-21F)
124 SETH BOYDEN TERRACE
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

This complex, established in 1941, was named for Seth Boyden. Boyden was a renowned inventor who was known for his process for casting malleable iron and for manufacturing a form of approved patent leather. His work greatly contributed to the onset of locomotives and railroads by making vast improvements in stationary steam engines.

Until his death in 1870, Boyden was continually absorbed with his love for inventing which greatly exceeded any concern for profit.

STELLA WRIGHT HOMES (N.J. 2-15)
159 SPRUCE STREET
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

This housing project, established in 1959, was named for Stella Windsor Wright, who was a prominent social worker in Newark. She founded an agency called "The Friendly Neighborhood House" and was dearly remembered for her work among Blacks in the Old Third Ward. She was also a teacher in the Oklahoma public school system.

Stella Windsor Wright died in 1931.

STEPHEN CRANE VILLAGE (N.J. 2-6, 2-16, 2-22C & 2-22D)
900 FRANKLIN AVENUE
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

This complex, established in 1940, was named for writer, Stephen Crane. Born in Newark in 1871, Crane was an outstanding author and although he lived a short life, he went on to become a legend after his death. At the age of 21, he wrote "The Red Badge of Courage" (a depiction of the civil war), which is still considered to be a literary masterpiece.

Crane's experience of being shipwrecked off the Florida Coast while en route to Cuba inspired him to write "The Open Boat." Determined to write a book about the Bowery and the people who live there, he spent time hanging around saloons and street corners in order to get the flavor of the environment and its people. By 1891, he wrote the book that was the result of this research and entitled it, "Maggie, a Girl of the Streets." Being very daring for its time, the book shocked the publishers, who at first refused to even print it. It later was published and eventually gained more recognition with the onset of the success of his other works. These works included: "The Third Violet," "The Little Regiment," "War is Kind" and other much renowned books and short stories.

Having always suffered from a genetic frailty, he contracted a number of illnesses while serving in Guantanamo. However, many memorable short stories emerged from that experience. His health slowly began to fail him during this period, however, and Stephen Crane died in Baden Weiler, Germany on June 5, 1900 at the tender age of 29.

TERRELL HOMES (N.J. 2-9)
35 RIVERVIEW COURT
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

This project opened on November 1, 1946 and is located on Riverview Court in the Ironbound Section of Newark. It was originally named for Franklin D. Roosevelt, but it later took the name of one of it's tenants, Milliard E. Terrell, an exceptional man who committed his life toward community efforts. Until the time of his death (February 27, 1986), Terrell proved himself to be an outstanding civic leader.

Being one of the first tenants to move into the housing project (he moved in on November 5, 1946 - five days after it opened), Terrell became progressively active throughout the years. He not only helped to organize a tenant league, but in 1973, ex-mayor Kenneth Gibson appointed him to the N.H.A. Board of Commissioners.

At a rededication ceremony on June 6, 1986 (at which time the tenement was named after him), he was praised by several government and city officials. Terrell was closely associated with current Newark Housing Authority Director, Milton A. Buck, who had much regard for his input on community matters. Current Mayor Sharpe James reflected upon the quality of his work and pointed out how Terrell admirably contradicted the fallacy that public housing isn't workable.

TERRELL HOMES (N.J. 2-9) (Cont.)

Unavoidably committed to improving the quality of life for his fellow tenants, Terrell developed several programs in the areas of education, health and recreation. He also implemented various social functions and gatherings for senior citizens, as well as sports activities for youngsters.

Terrell had the distinction of not only being the first tenant to have a housing project named after him (renamed in this case), but also the first tenant commissioner to be awarded the honor of serving on the N.H.A.'s Board of Commissioners.

Milliard E. Terrell will always be remembered as a responsible citizen and dynamic community leader who made an indelible mark in Newark's growth with his hard work and dedication.

WALSH HOMES (N.J. 2-11)
1945 MC CARTER HIGHWAY
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

Named for Archbishop Walsh, this housing project opened in 1953. Born in Parker's Landing, Pennsylvania in 1873, Thomas J. Walsh was appointed Archbishop of Newark, December 10, 1937. Affectionately called "Bishop of Education and Charity," he made history in catholic circles for his work among Blacks in the Newark diocese. Walsh was the first Bishop to baptize a Black in the U.S. (September 8, 1935). He helped to establish the "Christ the King" parish in Jersey City and the "Queen of Angels" parish in Newark. He enlisted the aid of Mt. Carmel Guild's Catechetical Department which dispatched trained teachers to teach Catholicism to non-Catholic Blacks. He also obtained help from the Physical Relief Department which offered aid in feeding the poor and clothing the naked.

It was because of services such as these and the large number of converts he was able to present to the Catholic Church (as a result of his growing parishes in Newark and Jersey City), that Walsh was well known and credited for his success in the spreading of the faith among Blacks.

A Pallium was bestowed upon Archbishop Walsh on April 27, 1938, with an accompanying article describing his work among Blacks of the Newark Diocese. Archbishop Thomas J. Walsh died on June 6, 1952.